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The Commonweal

July 29, 1949

The College: Assembly Line or Community?

Willis D. Nutting

Worker Priests of France

Monsignor Jean Calvet

Technology & Disintegration

Walter J. Marx

VOLUME L 15c NUMBER 16

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Next Week—

THE COLLEGE: A COMMUNITY. Willis D. Nutting, in the concluding instalment of his article begun this week, proposes a reform in education. "I would put in a plea for a complete rejection of the ideology of the factory with its quantitative standards. In its place I would put the ideology of the community, with a recognition of the dominance of personal rather than mechanical relationships. The two ideologies are incompatible."

SHORT AND SELECT. J. F. Powers, writing about a recently published selection of Monsignor Ronald Knox's sermons, contrasts them to the usual Sunday fare. "I myself have suffered all my adult life from something I can only describe as My Sunday Sickness. This is what comes from listening intently during the sermon."

DOG DAYS IN ILLINOIS. James O'Gara reports the human interest complications, as well as a recent journalistic war fought in Chicago over a proposed piece of legislation which would have made dogs available for vivisection and medical research.

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The
COMMONWEAL

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THE COMMONWEAL *is indexed in the Reader's Guide, Catholic Periodical Index and The Guide to Catholic Literature. Founded by the Calvert Associates, Inc., in 1924 with Michael Williams as President and Editor.*
Published weekly and copyrighted 1949 in the U.S.A., by The Commonweal Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y. MUrray Hill 3-9685. Entered as second-class matter February 9, 1934, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1870. U. S. and Canada $7 a year. Foreign $8. Single copies 15c.

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Communism and Excommunication

THE DECREE of the Supreme Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office concerning the excommunication of Catholics implicated in Communism, is brief and in no way revolutionary. Its interpretation and enforcement are the duties of the Church authorities, eminently the bishops, although the excommunication is that "reserved especially to the Holy See." The full meaning will have to become apparent on a case by case basis.

There are terms which in the English translation are not altogether certain in the public mind. How much of the uncertainty is honest and sincere has been questionable for a long time, and one of the purposes of the decree must be to eliminate as much excuse for uncertainty as possible. Nevertheless, there likely will be need for interpretation of various elements of the decree. For example, what is it to "show favor to the Communist Party?" What is to be included and excluded when judging "support of Communist doctrine and practice?" What state of mind and will is required to merit the condemnation of "knowingly and freely" supporting Communism? What is the relationship between the whole round circle of Communist ideology and practice, and "the materialistic and anti-Christian doctrine of the Communists?" A mind external to the mind of the Church might bring up exhausting equivocations before recognizing the intended forces of these terms.

But we take the guiding idea to be clear for Catholics who are concerned with the communion of the Church. Communism and the Communist Party are specifically and definitely recognized by the Holy Office as not being simply a theory and policy of politics and economics, with a party to activate them: they are a religion and a church, with a "materialistic and anti-Christian doctrine." It is impossible to be a believer in the two conflicting doctrines, or a true member of the two conflicting churches. It is impossible to favor or propagate the two at once.

The working out of this fact is perhaps the principal interest in the present phase of history. Behind the Iron Curtain the separation is now the most necessary and the most cruel. In Italy and the diocese of the Pope, the Communist offensive forces the responsible confrontation of the facts. In France and the rest of Western Europe, and in the Americas, Christianity will be thrown away if its implications are not recognized and served.

In this contest between spiritual Christianity and "materialistic and anti-Christian doctrine" and practice, ignorance cannot be an excuse and ignorance could not lead to good will and charity. Excommunication is a spiritual weapon of charity, not imposed on any man by force. It is designed to preserve the Faith and to guide men on the right path, and away from the wrong path, toward truth and peace and reconciliation. This is not a decree of enmity toward the Communists who hold the anathematized doctrines and act according to their doctrines. Their position is made clear to them as to us, and it is for Christians to persuade their minds and their wills, not succumbing to Communist propaganda and force, but overcoming by faith and hope and charity.

Hybrid Isolationism

TOWARD THE END of the debate on the Atlantic Pact, things got down to this very fine point: can a Senator vote for the Pact and not vote later to send arms to Europe to support the Pact? The Administration, Mr. Dulles and Mr. Vandenberg thought a Senator could separate his two votes. Each was a distinct issue in our foreign policy.

But Senator Taft said no—when a Senator votes for the Pact he obligates himself to vote for arms, since the two are really inseparable. One implies the other. He therefore had to

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stand "with regret" against the Pact. Just to show that he wasn't really a hopeless isolationist, he proposed instead to extend the Monroe Doctrine to cover Western Europe.

Now it is quite interesting to realize that this was not primarily an argument about the methods of furnishing arms: whether or not we should send certain weapons, how many, where and when. This was an argument really about our moral obligation. Senator Taft thought that, although two separate votes would be taken, we were assuming on the first vote for the Pact an obligation that would risk war, since it implied military commitment.

It might not be so hard to understand Mr. Taft's position here if he were disagreeing about the best way to send weapons or how many to send and where. There is still considerable disagreement about this even among supporters of the Pact. Nor is he wrong in asserting that the Atlantic Pact commits us at least to some military responsibility. What is mysterious is that Senator Taft really seems to be trying to escape risk and responsibility. He wants some kind of treaty which will remove the risk of war almost altogether. Then to compound the mystery, he suggests extension of the unilateral Monroe Doctrine—which specifically pledges this country to resist attack on any nation covered by the Doctrine. How this would conceivably be less war-risky than the Pact, the Senator did not convincingly explain.

In effect, Senator Taft would preserve his isolationism and his internationalism at the same time. He continues to think of the world as composed of air-tight, Monroe-Doctrine blocs, whereas the Atlantic Pact is admittedly only a transitory measure looking eventually to a federated government of nations.

The idea that the United States can somehow elude Europe's wars or responsibility for those wars is an idea that Mr. Taft, who is an expert polemicist, would probably oppose vehemently. But in fact, this debate demonstrates that his idea of internationalism or an extended Monroe Doctrine is a safe and sound piece of paper.

Distinctions: Robeson and Robinson

IT WAS no surprise to a great many people, especially in National League cities, that Jackie Robinson looked very good indeed before the House Committee on Un-American Activities. He was clear and balanced and patient to point out necessary distinctions. For himself, in the first place: he did not present himself as an expert on "political 'ism," but only "on base stealing" [we would have to add batting and covering second base] . . . and "on being a colored American with thirty years of experience."

Paul Robeson may make statements that "sound silly when he expresses them in public. . . . He's still a famous ex-athlete and a great singer and actor." The Communists plug race discrimination, and Jackie Robinson repudiates Communism; but there is still race discrimination. "And no one has ever questioned my race's loyalty except a few people who don't amount to very much. . . . I am a religious man. Therefore I cherish America where I can worship as I please. . . . But that doesn't mean we're going to stop fighting race discrimination in this country until we've got it licked." Jackie Robinson has given evidence of being an expert in that line too.

Recession

PREDICTING economic ups and downs is, like predicting the weather, a technical, but uncertain, business. No forecast is foolproof. The free, human choice—for example, to buy or not to buy—and numerous other factors partly elude the financial forecaster's graph and slide-rule. Since economics is not a perfectly applied science, two equally reasonable men may disagree about how to apply it to a given situation.

Facing the present recession, President Truman asks for Government spending—and a consequent budget deficit—to prime the business pump. This formula should hardly have taken anyone by surprise. It is the New Deal formula over again.

Nor should it be surprising to find Senator Taft disagreeing with Fair Deal finance. Just the thought of deficit financing and an unbalanced budget makes Mr. Taft nervous. His anxiety is, of course, not altogether imaginary. He fears that a pump-primer Government gradually piles up debt, imposes heavy taxes to pay it off, interferes more and more in private business and comes finally to the "totalitarian state, directing the lives and activities of its citizens." The pattern is not without historical foundation in fact.

What the President offers is a remedy that most people seem to feel has "worked" before to promote recovery. He hopes to meet the deficit through taxes when good times return—as he did during the recent post-war boom. He is less frightened than Mr. Taft at the prospect of a centralized welfare state.

What Senator Taft stands for is a retrenchment, an economic individualism that is popularly out of favor because its excesses are identified with economic royalism, concentrating wealth in the hands of a few. For example, when Mr. Taft says: "If the Government would let the people keep their money instead of taking it away in taxation, you would have just as much purchasing power and a lot more freedom," there is little in his statement that takes into account the social inequalities and the mal-distribution of wealth which pertains in a laissez-faire heyday and

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which has helped to induce a regulatory state centralism. The fact is that everywhere, in one form or another, the welfare state has arrived as the successor to old-line capitalism. In that sense, we are trading some of our freedoms for security. The trade is partly voluntary, partly enforced by the intricate circumstances and cycles of our economic system—such as the present recession.

In the trade, there is an enormous peril to our political and personal freedoms. It is a risk we are apparently willing to take. Even Wall Street, which certainly has no love for statism, reacted happily to the President's economic report. We are willing to take the risk remembering the hunger of one great depression (which set in shortly after our post World War I decision to retrench and to cut Government spending) and remembering also the recovery that Government spending helped to promote under the New Deal.

The real issue now would seem to be the challenging one of preserving a free society in a welfare state.

Dealing the Cards of Industrialism

THE Singer Manufacturing Co. (sewing machines) and Local 401 of the United Electrical Workers have been blocking each other in a disastrous stalemate since May 1st, which is no inconsiderable cause of recession in Northern New Jersey. Since then, 6,700 union workers have been striking Singer's Elizabeth, N. J., plant, pulling out 1,000 more production workers with them and about 1,500 supervisory and administrative employees. A so-far insoluble basic issue of the dispute (how wonderfully complicated is industrialism!) is the time it ought to take a man to deal a pack of cards. Max Wiener has reported the situation in an interesting and instructive series of special columns for the Newark *News*.

For 76 years the Elizabeth plant of the Singer Company operated peacefully, with no strike, and until 1943, no union. That year the UEW organized the shop, and two years later demanded, and obtained from the company, a revision of its wage system—an over-all rationalization of the piece work, "incentive" plan of payment. An engineer named Philip Carroll, Jr., was hired by management and worked out a "standard times" method for the whole factory, which was instituted without complaint and operated successfully until May 1st of this year. The union had then decided there was a speed-up and sweat shop, and management had decided that there was threat of featherbedding and a slow-down.

THE main fighting issue, according to Mr. Wiener's convincing articles, is the "works standard system"—the "normal" speed of labor on which pay is based. That goes back to the card table. The rate of pay on piece work is set by establishing the hourly output achieved at a base speed of work. The "normal effort" used in computing this fundamental speed is what a man expends in dealing 52 cards in 27 seconds. Time and motion studies of job operations made by the engineer break them down into the equivalent of dealing so many decks of cards.

The "normal" piece work pay was expected to be the "base" plus about 25%, gained by the "incentive speed" put on by the employee, who isn't playing poker for match sticks. The actual average pay reached base plus 40%. The union does not contest the high pay; they are worried about bringing their own lay-offs by their efficiency, and, they claim, about nervous breakdowns.

The union questions the basic standards of time and motion, beginning with 52 cards per 27 sec., and the basic standard of applying that to making a sewing machine. Singer offers to recheck and arbitrate any specific job on complaint, in order to make sure is does conform with the standard, but management will not permit union interference in standard making or in rationalizing work operation, set-up and tooling.

U.E.: "Why take Phil Carroll's word for it? Why 27 seconds? Why not 30 or 35?"

Singer: "It's getting pretty damn tough when you're going to let some arbitrator determine how you're going to run your plant. . . . We'll recheck . . . but we won't arbitrate the basic concept of normal effort. The union was satisfied with that concept for three years. . . ."

So the first question is labor's rights in the establishment of standards in factory piece work. The UE has apparently tried to work both sides of the street: "The union did not ask for any right to help set the standards. Nor did it ask for any impartial engineer at the outset. It does want the right to attack rates set by the company, including the normal incentive work standards." It appears necessary in practice, and human in theory, for workers to participate in deciding the standards. It is a right with a responsibility which unions steer away from: they must become implicated in the business, partly responsible for profits and loss and competition and public service and effect, if they do exercise such rights.

Beyond that question is the problem of piece work in general, and the relations of a man's personal work to mechanical assembly line production. What indeed is "normal effort"? How can an individual conform to any standard whatsover which is applied to the work of 7,700 men all organized for the purpose of turning out as efficiently as possible a uniform mechanical product to be delivered in a world market? This obscure and fundamental question has become a most practical problem in Elizabeth, N. J. Ask the local merchants.

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The College: Assembly Line or Community?

When education patterns itself on industrial techniques, it adopts even the ideals of industry

Willis D. Nutting

THE LACK of satisfactory results in teaching the Liberal Arts in our colleges has long been a matter of reproach from those outside the colleges, and of despair for those within them. When we seek an explanation for this unsatisfactoriness, we usually blame poor teachers (poor in more ways than one) or poor students.

May I suggest that they may not be responsible?

When we have good teachers, competently trained and industrious, the results are not startlingly different from what they are when the teachers are obviously not up to standard. The majority of students seem to be quite capable of going through the process untouched, whether the teaching is good or bad. Yet these same students, so determinedly resistant to what they are exposed to at college, show an amazing ability to learn in almost every other situation. It might therefore be profitable to seek the trouble elsewhere than in the student or the teacher, for these two are not the only elements in that complex of associations in which knowledge is given and received.

The teacher-learner relationship seems to have a tendency to crystallize itself in institutions which parallel those of the contemporary economic world. The Medieval university, for instance, was modeled after the craft guild of the time. This was a rather fortunate circumstance, for the guild was a co-operative institution in which relations were intensely personal and where human dignity was valued.

It is quite evident that the modern college is being assimilated more and more to the pattern of modern industry. This should be no cause for surprise. An institution which looms so large in a society as industry does in ours would naturally tend to absorb all things to itself and to occupy the minds of men, whatever it is that they are trying to do. Since industry is so successful in getting done what it sets out to do, its methods are assumed to be the ideal methods for getting anything done. This is understandable, but it may well give cause for worry. For when an institution exists for one particular purpose, there is danger when its ways are too closely copied by men who are trying to do something entirely different.

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THE GOAL of industry is the production of material goods as efficiently and in as great a volume as possible. In order to accomplish this, industry has adopted a set of practices generally assumed to be effective. Some of these are: a centralization of authority in a pyramided order; an extreme specialization of labor; a rigid standardization of machines and products so that parts made in many places will fit together, and so that equivalent parts made anywhere will be interchangeable.

This standardization means a uniformity which is expressed in exact quantitative measurements. In human relations, industry divides its personnel into labor and management. "Paper work" and the class of secretaries and clerks have grown enormously. Relationship between person and person has become bureaucratized.

The great influence of industry on our colleges has not been due to conscious pressure exercised by industrialists. Anyone teaching in a college knows that this pressure is comparatively negligible. Neither can the industrial influence be detected in the external forms of academic institutions. The forms of the older academic tradition remain. We wear caps and gowns, hold graduation exercises, grant scholarships, and reverence the title "Doctor." It is rather the methods, the ideals, and the standards of measurement of industry that have filtered into the academic institutions, so that the general tone of industry prevails.

The industrial atmosphere of our institutions of higher learning is evident in the two most important relationships that exist there: the relation between the institution and its students, and the relation between the administration and the faculty.

In dealing with its students the college uses not only the assembly line technique—this might be excused due to the great number of students to be handled—but the assembly line ideal. The high school graduate is put on the line, and as

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he moves through eight semesters, various parts are put on so that by the time he reaches the end of the line he has a complete "college education." This education is simply an accumulation of standardized parts. The colleges are tooled to make parts so uniform that a student may be taken from an assembly line in Massachusetts, moved across the continent, and placed on a line on the West Coast, there to have the remaining parts affixed. And the specifications that go along with him are so complete that the superintendent of the Western assembly line will know exactly what has already been done and what additional work there is to do.

There is a fundamental series of parts which must be affixed to all students, but in addition to these a certain definite number of parts may be chosen by the student. Thus the assembly line can produce several models of "college education."

The *part* affixed in this industrial process is the *course*—so many hours of instruction in such and such a subject, with a certain quantitative value in *credits*. The course is a neat unit of knowledge, complete in itself, duly fastened to the student's mind, inspected, passed—and forgotten. Once it is on, it is on, and we do not have to worry about it any more. When a student has had all the courses bolted on, we look him over to see that nothing has been forgotten, we add up the credits that the courses are worth, and if what we find agrees with the specifications in the catalogue, we give him a degree which signifies that he has a college education.

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OBSERVE how closely we follow the industrial procedure.

At a certain point on the assembly line the fenders are put on the Ford. Once they are there they stay put. We can forget them. If, at the end of the line, the Ford is found to have all the parts that the specifications call for, and if each part has passed inspection as it went on, then we have a complete Ford. If the work is started in Detroit and the unfinished car is then shipped to California and completed there, we can be sure that the finished product will be satisfactory, because all the parts are standard.

At a certain point in college—the sophomore year—the student "takes" History 21. Once he has passed the course no one need worry about that any more. The credit for it stays put. And if at the end of his senior year he has passed all his courses and has the required number of credits he is an educated man. Should he leave our school at the end of the sophomore year and go to the University of Iowa, he could take up his series of courses where he left off; and when he had the required number he would graduate.

This industrial procedure, with its standardized courses and its scheme of recognized credits, certainly does make it possible for students to shift from school to school with a minimum of difficulty. It also provides a convenient quantitative standard for the measurement of something. (Measurement of *what* is not so easy to determine). If the aim of higher education is to enable students to move from Maine to California painlessly, or to make it possible for an administration to file long columns of percentages under each student's name, then the system is a huge success. But as a system for training a man's mind, or even for finding out whether his mind has been trained, it is open to criticism.

To take an obvious example: a man may reach the end of his senior year with a fund of knowledge that all his teachers recognize as satisfactory. He may be an ornament to the institution. But somehow, through an error in reckoning back in his freshman year, he is shy three credits of the required number. He cannot graduate until this lack is made good by "taking" another course. And yet a very inferior man, who has barely passed most of his courses and has an average just within the minimum, can graduate with his class. We know that he forgot the content of each course as soon as he passed it. We know that he is not a fit person to receive a degree. And yet the system compels us to give him the academic recognition that we deny to the other student. In the last analysis a man's success in college is judged not by the knowledge that he has attained but by his conformity to a system of record keeping. The filing cabinet and the adding machine stand triumphant over mind.

★

THE SCHEME of evaluating intellectual attainment by the course-with-credit method is valid only if two assumptions are true: (1) that having taken and passed a course is evidence that a certain body of knowledge is possessed, and (2), that not having taken this course is evidence that this body of knowledge is not possessed. Anyone who has taught in college knows that neither of these assumptions is true. It is therefore difficult to see how the validity of the method can be maintained.

But the course-with-credit system has gained such hold on our collegiate institutions that few educators seem to be able to think of college education in any other terms. They are in bondage to the industrial point of view. Even in the contemporary effort to improve college teaching, our energies are directed toward improving the technique, but not toward changing the system. We try to "hire" better skilled mechanics—experts in specialized fields—so that the parts to be affixed will be of higher grade. Sometimes we think to help matters by making the courses stiffer, so that

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the student will not have so much time for loafing. Here again we assume a quantitative standard. A student will be better if he reads twice as much for a course. If he is never idle his mind is bound to improve. This is equivalent to increasing the efficiency of the assembly line. But the application of the "speed up" to the things of the intellect is at least questionable.

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THERE is a growing recognition of the need for integrating the knowledge that our students acquire. In our loyalty to the system we supply this need by introducing another required course which will aid them in integration. What we refuse to realize is that perhaps it is just this system of courses and credits that prevents the integration we are seeking, and that therefore the addition of another course, no matter how good it may be, will not help the situation. If we give the student different parts of knowledge separately, judge them separately, reckon them separately when calculating the possibility of his graduation, and keep him back if each separate part is not in order, it is rather naïve to expect that he will view the sum total of his education as anything but a collection of splinters that cannot be fitted together. *If he is to view his knowledge as a whole we must precede him in viewing it as a whole.* We must evaluate it as a whole and not as a collection of packaged parts.

But there are defects of the course-for-credit system which are much more serious than the exaltation of record-keeping over mind. The system tends to prevent rather than encourage the development of the mind because it concentrates on formal teaching—the work of expert mechanics on the assembly line—rather than on learning. The final product—an education—is conceived of as something that is given to the student; and since we expect this education to be standardized we assume that we must give it in one standardized way. If he is to learn this and this and this, he must be taught this and this.

We have only to turn from our industrialized ideology to our experience, however, to realize that what the student learns is not co-extensive with what we try to teach him. It is not only that much of what we teach does not sink in. This sad fact is the theme of most faculty discussions. There is also the joyous fact that he learns so much that he is not taught. But here we run into a fact that is even sadder: with our course-for-credit system we have no means of recognizing this spontaneous learning.

The normal human being will not be bound to one formalized scheme of learning. If the attempt is made to bind him he stops learning. For the human person can and does learn in myriad ways. He can learn in solitude by reading, by observing and experimenting, by reasoning and imagining. He can learn in society by discussion and argument, by competition and emulation, and even by banter. He learns from teachers sometimes by acceptance of what is taught, sometimes by negative reaction to it, sometimes by inspiration to seek further, sometimes by admiration of the teacher's learning, sometimes through dread of the teacher's toughness. Of all this learning, that which comes from courses-with-credit is a very small part.

★

THE FATAL DEFECT of the system is that it gives consideration to but few of these many ways of learning. What is not learned in a course-with-credit does not "count." Ways of learning other than the course-with-credit are not encouraged by the school and are not even recognized. The system binds the mind to one scheme of learning. It puts the free-ranging intellect into a strait-jacket where it languishes. Here is the explanation for that truly terrifying phenomenon that all of us who are teachers so often witness—the fact that the graduating senior has less intellectual interest than he had when he came to us as a freshman.

That the assembly line technique is not ideal is admitted in the common practice of relaxing the rigidity of the course-for-credit system in the case of graduate students. But this is beginning at the wrong end. If the system is bad for advanced students, it is much worse for those who are just starting out. It initiates them into college with an entirely inadequate conception of what learning is and how it is attained. Because it is singularly ineffective in awakening their desire to know, it is one of the worst possible ways of introducing a person into the life of the intellect. It should not surprise us therefore that most of our students, thus wrongly introduced to learning, should keep up a four years' resistance to our attempts to teach them. The remarkable thing is that in spite of the obstacles placed in their way by the system, some few students actually become educated. It gives one a certain optimism in the face of general discouragement.

The waste, however, is appalling. A reading of the list of seniors is a dismal roll call of young people whose minds have not been wakened. Not by any stretch of the imagination can our system of higher education be considered a success. It is definitely not worth the price that is paid for it. But most of those who realize its deficiencies can think of reform only in terms of the system that exists.

Next week Mr. Nutting will conclude this article by suggesting a substitute for the system described here.

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The Worker Priests of France

To make contact with laborers, French priests go into the factory and its environs as fellow workers

Monsignor Jean Calvet

VARIOUS PHENOMENA in France reveal an ever more marked tendency to bring religion closer to the people—to bring its doctrine, its liturgy and its resources of every kind within easy reach of modern man. This rapproachement cannot be achieved without an intimate knowledge of the life and aspirations of the masses, and consequently not without close contact between the clergy and the people, in all the many cells of the social structure.

This is a problem which has arisen, in our time, in Paris and in the other great cities where the transformation of industry and modern conditions of work has brought together masses of workers, separated from the rest of the community and constituting veritable cities outside the city, or as certain harsh observers have said, concentration camps for the galley slaves of human labor. These agglomerations, created by the factory, have the factory as their center, not the church, which remains far away, in the heart of a Christian settlement. The worker does not readily take the road to the church; and if he is drawn there by a vestige of faith or by curiosity, he has the impression, when he sees those neat rows of well polished praying stools, protected by solemn-looking railings, that he in some "bourgeois" place, reserved for the boss; for him, there are the "bistro" and the movie house, after working hours, and some familiar spot in the nearby countryside, on Sunday.

For a long time now, far-sighted apostles have sought to come closer to this proletarian mass which no longer comes to them. However, the most ingeniously conceived popular missions and the most generous social services have not produced the hoped-for rapid results. It was felt that this semi-failure arose from the fact that the priest still remained an element external to, and different from, the people he was evangelizing. The logical conclusion was drawn by intrepid logicians: the priest must become a part of the working class, incarnate himself in them, as Christ incarnated Himself in man; he must become one of the mass, living the life of the rest, just like the rest. Such was the guiding principle of Abbé Henri Godin who, in 1944, organized the Mission de Paris, with the approval of the ecclesiastic authorities.

Friends and disciples of Abbé Godin, who died shortly after the foundation of this movement, immediately carried his principle to its most far-reaching conclusion: in order to achieve real contact with the worker, the priest must be a worker himself—not temporarily, while he makes an investigation or undergoes a period of training, but definitively, like a professional, a man of the trade, who wears the costume and endures the labor, anxieties and risks of the trade, and enjoys the same holidays and diversions as the other workers. Once the priest is no longer distinguishable in any way from the worker, he can talk to the worker as an equal and a brother; he can lead him, by his example, toward the life of the spirit and some day, perhaps, to Christ.

★

THIS IS HOW THE WORKER priests came into being. And as this movement is not lacking in a certain picturesque and romantic quality, it aroused the curiosity of newspapermen, who have written about it all over the world and not very accurately. They have thus given the worker priests a publicity which they were not seeking and which has annoyed them.

How numerous are these priests? According to a well-documented article on their work which appeared in the April issue of *Etudes,* there are eighteen of them in Paris. These include factory workers, shoemakers and truck drivers in the public markets. The majority are secular priests, but among them are several Dominicans, Jesuits, Franciscans and Capuchins. To this list should be added the famous Father Loew, a Dominican who became a longshoreman in Marseilles, a monk who is a miner in the coal pits of the Saar, and several priests who have engaged in various trades in Lyon, Limoges and Besançon.

We must bow our heads in deep humility before the heroism of the worker priest, before the heroism of his life and his perseverance. The day is hard on the assembly line; one cannot follow one's own train of thought or escape for even one moment from the inexorable task. In the evening, the priest takes off his blue blouse, puts on his jacket, summons up his soul and returns with a few comrades to the hotel where he

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has a furnished room. In the common room which will soon be the dining-room, on the table designed for ordinary meals, he says Mass before a few believers and sympathizers. Then, around the table, the men begin to talk. They talk of all sorts of things. The priest's fellow workers come in and go out. Neighbors stop in. The talk continues after the meal, quite late into the night, because the worker priest's companions have acquired the habit of asking him all sorts of questions. He breaks off in the middle of his last prayer out of sheer weariness. He falls asleep and, the next day, starts the grueling routine all over again. All this is very beautiful, very touching; it is in the spirit of the early Church. But how many will be strong enough, physically and morally, to "take" the strain of this dual profession for very long?

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THE DIRECTORS of the Mission de Paris are the first to recognize that the rôle of the worker priest can only be an exception, a sort of prospecting by pioneers in the virgin forest. Normally, the contact of the Church with the working-class world must be made by a priest living the life of a priest, but in a working-class milieu. He lives in a poor room, like everyone else, he dresses like everyone else, he does his marketing and takes care of his own house, like everyone else; but instead of working on the assembly line, he concerns himself with the general interests of the group, material and spiritual interests. Always at everyone's disposal, he is everyone's servant, a servant who receives no wages. He also constitutes, in infidel territory, a sort of parish, a temporal parish where God's grace in time will find its place. He knows that the other parish, the traditional Christian parish, is necessary, that it is the regular group in which the faithful gather for public worship. He continues his mission in the land of the infidels, but will send his unbelievers to the parish as soon as they show themselves capable of understanding it.

This is an admirable and praiseworthy ministry. Perhaps it is not as new as some people think. The country curé in France today lives in a poorer house and leads a more meagre existence than his parishioners. He does his own housework. His door is open to all, all day long and in the evening after working hours. It does not occur to him to turn himself into an agricultural laborer; the men of the soil would not understand him if he did. They have confidence in him for the very reason that he is different, separate from them. But upon occasion, he lends them a hand for some urgent task: he repairs a machine that is jammed, because he has some knowledge of mechanics, he prunes a tree, because he has read books on agronomics. The country curé remains a man of God but is, at the same time, a man among men, subject to the same destiny, waiting, through the same vicissitudes, for the same death.

What results have the worker priests achieved? One cannot measure spiritual realities as one measures steel output by drawing up semi-annual balance sheets with graph curves and statistics. The worker priests have been at their task four years. What they are doing will be discussed a hundred years from now. For the moment, they are testifying to Christ and putting a certain question to men whose undeniable good will is inhibited by prejudice and ignorance. These men or their sons will have to answer that question. The working-class world of today is saturated with vain ideologies; it no longer responds to doctrinaires who raise theoretical questions—it responds only to statements which provide it with a concrete basis for decisions. And if he who makes these statements gives the workers in addition the comfort of fraternal solidarity, their hearts also are won.

This conquest takes time. The workers have not yet gone beyond the stage of surprise and ill humor at the idea that a priest should engage in their trade, and quite readily suspect him of being an agent of the boss. In ten years, people will speak differently of the worker priests; they will no longer speak with hostility or surprise of something that has become natural and customary.

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AVERAGE Catholic opinion looks upon the efforts of the worker priests with the sympathy that generous gestures always inspire and with the skepticism of those who, not being engaged in the act of generosity, do not have the same enthusiasm for it. Prudent people say that saintliness, which usually exceeds the norm in order to arouse sleeping consciences, has been considered madness by wise men, and are reserving their judgment. The hierarchy is also waiting. If it is sometimes obliged to moderate the zeal of certain priests, its rôle is not to discourage this zeal nor to place obstacles in the way of its expression. The late Archbishop of Paris, Cardinal Suhard, would never listen to any criticism of his worker priests, and always defended these "freeshooters" of God. He considered them somewhat like missionaries who go out into new territory in the African bush and work out their methods according to the realities they find, rather than according to rules learned in the seminary. To use the expression of the founders of the movement, is not France a "missionary land?"

This expression is exact when applied to the working-class suburbs of Paris, but it would be false if it were extended to embrace the country

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as a whole. That is why the priest who turns himself into a factory worker, a miner, a truck driver or a longshoreman can only be an exception which proves the generosity, the broad originality, and the youthfulness of the Church, as well as a certain imaginativeness in action characteristic of those who have what motorists call: reserves of power.

Pope Pius XII, in a recent speech to the priests of the Leo XIII College, probably alluded to these original forms of apostleship when he said: "If it is true that those who are impelled by a desire for puerile and misplaced novelty are in error, that they injure the immutability of the Church by their acts and agitations, it is equally true that those who would seek, consciously or unconsciously, to fix the Church in sterile immobility would be equally mistaken. . . . The Catholic clergy is at a decisive turning point in its history, before which it cannot remain a passive spectator."

It would seem that the French priests are not sitting passively on the bank of the river, like the line fisherman who is just as eager to enjoy the sun and life itself as to catch fish. The French clergy is journeying through the night and piloting its bark in the storm amid dangerous reefs. Nor is my metaphor far-fetched—they tell me there is a priest among the "Iceland Fishermen."

Britain's Dollar Crisis

J. L. BENVENISTI

IT LOOKS as if the British dollar crisis were going to lead to a fine crop of false inferences and faulty generalizations. Everywhere the verdict seems to be that the British collapse is the result of socialism and that Britain has now to choose between socialism and solvency.

This judgment is actually quite dangerous because under certain interpretations of the word "socialism" it is probably true. What for the most part the American press has done is to accept the judgment and then put an interpretation on socialism which makes the whole judgment false. For instance, a great deal of blame is being put on Britain's nationalized industries. Yet these have no causal connection with the dollar shortage. The various nationalization schemes already operative may have been prudent or the reverse, but they cannot as yet be shown to have affected Britain's ability to sell her goods abroad, nor have they to an appreciable extent increased her consumption of goods imported from the dollar area, or for that matter from anywhere else.

Much the same applies to the social services and to the food and housing subsidies. Here too it is doubtful whether increased consumption by the lower income groups has created a demand for dollars which would not otherwise have existed. By and large this increased consumption has been paid for by the reduced—often the tragically reduced—consumption of the middle and upper income groups. It might be argued that the increased burden of taxation has prevented the creation of risk capital and acted as a disincentive to speculative enterprise. This is partly true and in the long run would certainly be a factor to reckon with, but the time has been too short for these causes to take effect.

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A MUCH more valid diagnosis is that all these things taken together, i.e., the advent of the labor government, social services, subsidies and the rest, have created a kind of millenial frame of mind. There is a subconscious feeling that the bad old days are now a thing of the past. Short commons and exacting toil—these were nothing but devices of the wicked capitalists and derive from no necessity inherent in the nature of things. So why continue with them when the labor government is making an end of the capitalists and all their works? Also, the very fact that the state is acting as a kind of universal fairy godmother creates the illusion that goods and services can somehow be conjured up ex nihilo.

It would be most unjust, on the strength of what has been said, to pass an omnibus condemnation on the British for not working hard enough. Many of them work very hard indeed. But there is a general consensus, too persistent to be denied, that they do not realize—or at any rate do not realize as strongly as do the Americans—that you cannot take more out of the pool than you put in. Corroboration of this view can be found in any issue of the *Economist*. It is this failing together with the protection, through widespread government-sponsored cartelization, of the inefficient producer, that is the chief cause of high British costs, and it is here, if anywhere, that the cause of the threatened British default is to be found.

If the essence of socialism is a mental attitude, then the American press is quite right in connecting socialism with the problem of Britain's dwindling reserves; but it would be a pity if, as a result of inadequate verbal definition, interested parties were allowed to drag in Britain's difficulties in order to build up a case against the TVA or land conservation. Yet unless somebody keeps a sharp lookout this is precisely what is going to happen.

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The Labor Movement

Politics in Collective Bargaining

THE TAFT-HARTLEY ACT gave our government increased power to interfere in the collective bargaining relationship. In consequence labor relations are enmeshed in politics. In fact the strength of government has been placed on the side of the employer. For the use of the injunction does not settle a dispute. It merely stops a strike, which is a different matter. The causes of the dispute remain.

Because of this labor has been unreservedly opposed to the injunction. To labor it is clear that an injunction is directed solely against it. It, alone, is enjoined; it, alone, is punishable. No question of logic or morality is involved in this. Labor is simply forbidden to strike during the injunctive period. Management, which has, presumably, refused all demands levied on it remains untouched and untroubled.

Thus it is true to say that in using the injunction government interferes in collective bargaining. If management has said "No" to labor's proposals there has been no collective bargaining at all. To use the injunction in such a case is to prevent the redress of labor's grievances. But to do this is to use the great power of government in behalf of management.

The Administration was willing, during recent Senate debate, to submit a substitute for the injunction. This substitute was called the Lucas Amendment, and it offered plant seizure as the "national emergency" measure. This amendment was defeated in the Senate by a vote of 46 to 44. Its defeat was largely credited to Senator Taft.

As it was a defeat for the Administration and for labor, so it was a victory for management. During the debate one New England Senator had eight calls from New England industrialists demanding that he vote against the Lucas proposal. When the amendment lost, Senator Taft became a candidate who had management's special approval. About his coming campaign in Ohio, Joseph Alsop has written: "It is an open secret that Right Wing business men all over the country are already laying the cash on the line to aid the Taft campaign."

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OF COURSE it can be said that Mr. Truman's proposals in the present steel dispute are, in some measure, politically motivated. Since he has pledged his administration to repeal the Taft-Hartley Law, it might prove politically dangerous for him to resort to the use of the injunction ever again.

Nonetheless his suggestion to prevent a steel strike must be considered on its merits. The President proposed to the steel producers and to the union that, given their acceptance, he would appoint a fact-finding board to investigate the issues in the dispute, and that both parties "would continue work and operation under the terms of the collective bargaining agreements now in effect for a period of sixty days from July 16, 1949."

Mr. Truman made this offer after it had become certain that negotiations had broken down, and mediation had been exhausted. Faced with this situation the President had to make a decision, since the importance of steel to the American economy cannot be overstated.

The President's proposal evoked a great deal of criticism, and Mr. Benjamin Fairless, head of the United States Steel Corporation, first rejected it, and because of his influence, so did other companies. Mr. Fairless was opposed to the President's offer because the fact-finding board will report to the President "within forty-five days from July 16, 1949, with their recommendations to the parties as to fair and equitable terms of settlement."

There is a rub between Mr. Fairless and Mr. Truman. It is the position of United States Steel that the President has gone outside the law, because though the Taft-Hartley Law allows for the appointment of a fact-finding board, it shall have no power to make recommendations of any kind. The great steel corporation speaking on behalf of itself and of five other companies, together producing 63% of the nation's steel, thus appears as the defender of law and order.

Now what are the facts in this case between our largest steel corporation and our government? The first fact is that, according to the Taft-Hartley Law, whether or not a strike or threatened strike does "imperil the national health or safety" is wholly the opinion of the President of the United States. The language of the law is permissive, not mandatory, and the determination and the decision that such is the case are his alone. And this has application even to seeking an injunction to restrain a union from striking.

The second fact is the position taken by Senator Taft. Prior to the Fairless rejection, on apparent high constitutional ground, alongside Mr. Fairless, Senator Taft, fully aware of the terms of the Truman formula, told reporters that "the President has a perfect right to appoint a fact-finding board if he wants to, but I think it is doubtful whether it is wise at the present time."

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WHAT, THEN, must have gone on in the mind of Benjamin Fairless? He was willing to accept a fact-finding board which cannot make recommendations, but was unwilling to accept a board which could.

Mr. Truman asked United States Steel to reconsider its position saying, "Surely, you are not afraid to have your side of this dispute examined in the public interest." That goes to the heart of the matter. The United States Steel Corporation is afraid, is certainly unwilling, to have its side examined. For a board which is without power to recommend is without power to damage. But a board with the power with which Mr. Truman will invest it can be a conduit of facts to public opinion. This can be its great effect, indeed its only purpose, since its recommendations need not be accepted.

Evidently it is public opinion which, in advance, Mr. Fairless is repudiating. In a nation like our own public

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opinion is a pressure to which all must respond. It is a valid thing to suspect that he who is unwilling to present his case has no case.

The United States Steel Corporation has no right to require that there be no court, or that one be packed in its favor. All who submit to a tribunal must risk the judgment of that tribunal. United States Steel has no right to shout "foul" on a technicality, so that it can force an injunction against the steelworkers' union.

What the President has done—for whatever reasons—is to try to prevent a serious rent in our economic and social fabric. By rejection, U.S. Steel would have lain itself open to the conclusion that it had political motives, that it wished, as Senator Morse put it, "to have it held that any labor trouble is a national emergency," that it wanted to use government and the power of government to its own ends only. Fortunately, Mr. Fairless's second thought—finally accepting the "recommending" board—places U. S. Steel in a more balanced judicial position, and the public will have a better opportunity to study it.

FRANCIS DOWNING.

Communications

Immigration Quotas

American Consulate General
Munich, Germany

TO THE Editors: No doubt the impression created in your comment on the United States' immigration laws contained in an issue of THE COMMONWEAL which has just reached me [stating incorrectly that, under our immigration laws, a quota number is required for every member of a Japanese family while at the same time one quota number covers an entire European family] has long since been corrected. However, in case it still has been overlooked, I should like to point out that all people subject to the quota system are treated in the same manner as the Japanese, i.e., a quota number is required for each member of the family, not just for the head. The only exception to this is a child born of quota parents in a non-quota country, i.e., most places in the Western Hemisphere. Consequently the 100 Latvians per year authorized under the immigation laws means "100 men, women and children in all."

Having worked now for about four months on the visa-issuing end of our immigration laws, it appears to me that the entire field requires a thorough investigation with the view to introducing some much needed reform. Some outside agency might do well to initiate such an investigation in order to bring the facts to the attention of the American public and to create a demand for this reform. From my particular position it is difficult to achieve an objective approach.

JOHN M. THOMPSON, JR.

Catholic International News

Dutch Catholic Employers' Unions

"THE reform of society on the basis of the principles of natural law" must be the main purpose of the Catholic Employers' Union in the Netherlands, Cardinal De Jong, Archbishop of Utrecht, declared in a letter addressed to the Union on behalf of the Netherlands Hierarchy. The Cardinal referred to the forthcoming enactment of legislation concerning a Public Industrial Organization (PBO), a nationwide scheme in which the employers as well as the labor unions and the Government will cooperate.

"Experience has taught us," the Cardinal stated, "that labor unions as well as employers' unions based on ideological principles produce favorable results in collective bargaining as well as in social and economic legislation. We must not be satisfied, however, with what has been achieved so far, and must be ready for action especially now when the Public Industrial Organization is going to become a reality. The responsibility of Catholic employers is now greater than ever. . . . Since in the plans for the PBO, etc., employers' unions as well as labor unions are assigned an important role, we consider these unions, especially those built on a solid foundation of principles, as institutions of the utmost value. Your unions must see to it that in public organs Catholic employers' representatives are given proper representation. We believe that it is even more important that the activity of those organs is enabled to benefit from ideas which haxe been developed in our circles and that their growth is favored by a mentality which has been cultivated in our midst."

The Catholic employers' unions need not bring division into the ranks of industrialists and other employers, Cardinal De Jong stated, because "independent action may well be combined with cooperation with other trends among employers," and "this will be a blessing for the entire community of our people."

Catholic employers in the Netherlands have a twofold organization: a "standsorganisate," which is a religious, educational, and social group, and a network of "vakorganisaties," which take part in collective bargaining.

(The Hague, 7/16—CIP.)

Cologne Catholic Housing

MORE than one thousand homes are now being built under the auspices of the Home-Building Office of the Archdiocese of Cologne, it has just been announced here. The Clergy Bulletin of the Archdiocese stated that about 31,500 acres of Church land have been made available for home-building and small farms.

(Cologne, 7/6—CIP.)

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Papal Relief Children's Camps

OVER 90,000 full time and part time helpers, including 5,000 priests and almost 5,000 physicians, are, or will be, in attendance at the more than 4,000 summer camps for Italian children sponsored by the Papal Relief Commission (Pontificia Commissione Assitenza). Millions of children are going to benefit from these vacation camps, a representative of the Commission declared.

There are special camps for children with a heart condition, for those who have suffered infantile paralysis, for those afflicted with trachoma, and for children with minor psychopathic disorders. For the first time this year an individual filing card, giving the "health history" of the child and his parents, will be completed for each camper. (Rome, 7/12—CIP.)

Italian Christian Workers Push Co-ops

THE Italian Christian Workers' Association (ACLI) is seeking to make every member of its organization a member of a cooperative in a campaign to develop the cooperative movement in all provinces of Italy.

Marking July 2 as the anniversary of the cooperative movement throughout the world, the ACLI issued an announcement of its aims for the coming year. In addition to registering its membership in the Cooperative movement, the ACLI plans to make each provincial seat a center of a consumer cooperative, and to establish an agricultural cooperative, and where possible a consumer cooperative, in every community in the nation.

The announcement also made note of the fact that the ACLI has already established consumer and agricultural cooperatives for workers in Italy's largest towns. Agricultural cooperatives have also been developed in many smaller villages, the announcement states, but points out that the ACLI has encountered difficulty in organizing production cooperatives among industrial workers. (Rome, 7/8—CIP.)

Protestant-Catholic Committees for Religious Instruction in Germany

JOINT Protestant-Catholic Parents' Committees for the Defense of Religious Instruction in the Public Schools are now being formed in Luebeck, British Zone of Germany, as a result of a recent conference held in that city. Pointing out that religious instruction in the public schools of the State of Schleswig-Holstein is guaranteed by law, the joint Protestant-Catholic Committees will cooperate with the school authorities to smooth out any difficulties that may arise in applying the law. The Committees will steer clear of partisan politics.

The Conference decided also that the Parent Committees will have as one of their objects the strengthening of the parents' sense of responsibility for the religious education of their children.

Before World War II, the population of Schleswig-Holstein was almost completely Lutheran. The influx of refugees from the East, especially from the territories which have been annexed by Poland and the Soviet Union, have greatly increased the Catholic population. (Cologne, 7/15—CIP.)

The Screen

Lust for Lust

SOMETIMES when movies decide to display a little passion, they carry on as if they were discovering the emotions for the first time. A few choice examples are on review this week.

"Lust for Gold," which starts out in a fascinating documentary manner promising something better than it gives, has to do mainly with some twenty million dollars worth of gold stashed in a lost mine near Phoenix, Arizona. In the present, a young man (William Price) hopes to find this treasure. But in the past, we learn through a series of flashback how the gold got there and how many people lost their lives when their greed for the yellow stuff was too much for them. The principal flashback is carried on by: Glenn Ford, who discovered the cache and committed murder for it; Ida Lupino, who discovered Glenn and is willing to throw over her husband for Glenn and gold; Gig Young, as Ida's husband, who has no idea of being discarded unless of course he gets his cut. These thoroughly unpleasant people are hit by lust, bullets and a landslide, and come to no good end. And in the present, William Prince almost gets done in too. Needless to say, at the finale the gold is still buried and it's yours for the hunting. But if you take this blood-curdling melodrama as an example you'll leave it and the movie alone.

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"The Fountainhead," based on Ayn Rand's popular humdinger about lust and architecture, has the most pretentious combination of sense and nonsense to appear in a supposedly serious movie in a long time. While it offers a glowing defense of integrity and high standards in art, it also asks us to be impressed by a group of characters whose morals sink to a new low. The only one of these people, most of whom are dominated by a power complex, who is understandable is the big-shot publisher (effectively played by Raymond Massey) who has no respect for anyone or anything and winds up a suicide. The rest of the cast struggle with rôles beyond their or the audience's comprehension: Gary Cooper as the architect who finally achieves success with his modern ideas and then blows up a building that failed to follow his designs; Patricia Neal as the nymphomaniac who marries Massey because she loves Cooper; Kent Smith as the weakling who passes Cooper's designs off as his own; Robert Douglas as the newspaper columnist out to break Cooper as a step in his own rise to power.

In directing the turgid script, which Ayn Rand herself wrote for "The Fountainhead," King Vidor, not satisfied with the seamy plot, added a few cinematic symbols of his own; and these run the gamut with indelicacies not usually displayed in movies. Audiences will probably be more embarrassed than the uneasy cast of actors. But architects will no doubt be astounded at some of these inner meanings of their work which seemed

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formerly to be connected mainly with steel and brick and stone.

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Lizabeth Scott gets another chance to emote stolidly in a killer-diller called *"Too Late For Tears."* This piece starts interestingly enough with a scene in which Lizabeth and her husband (Arthur Kennedy) are speeding to a party and suddenly have a suitcase full of money thrust into their car. The husband is all for turning it over to the police; the wife insists they keep it. So far so good. But things start sizzling when Dan Duryea turns up for the dough and Lizabeth turns out to be a hell-cat who murders her husband and joins forces with Dan who thinks he's tough but can't hold a candle to Liz's brand of ruthless cruelty. Fortunately when the poison and gun-smoke are cleared away Don Defore is still left in the cast to carry on as a force for good. Obviously this lusty melodrama is too hiss-the-villainess to be taken seriously, but it does have one of the year's funniest lines. Duryea says it as he twists Liz's arm another notch: "At the risk of being tedious, where did you stash my cash?"

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That the English also break their reserve once in a while and throw lust to the winds can be seen in the gloomy item they have sent over with the title *"Daybreak."* If you think that this refers to any light coming with the dawn, you're mistaken. Eric Portman portrays a barber whose second and much more engrossing job is as a hangman who swings into action in the small hours. Well, he's a lonely man and rather unhappy about his second and quite necessary profession. So when he meets up with a pretty and homeless music-hall girl (Ann Todd), he marries her. Their happiness on the barge where they now live is, alas, only temporary. Eric hires a surly Scandinavian (Maxwell Reed) to work on the barge; and later while the hangman is away on his unpleasant business which requires overnight trips, the sailor makes advances on Ann which shock her only at first.

The mess into which this triangle gets is something terrific. Eric comes home early one night after a postponed job, discovers his wife and the sailor and then is supposedly killed by this Scandinavian during the roughhouse. You can imagine the dilemma he's in later when as hangman he is expected to do a job on the very man who's accused of his murder. The strange thing about this dour melodrama is that Compton Bennett has directed it so well that it almost has a fascinating quality and the cast manage to be believable as they morbidly trudge through the dark gloom. Arty patrons of the cinema may be spellbound by "Daybreak." More practical moviegoers may be likely to giggle over this hangman with a hangover.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Technology and Disintegration

WALTER J. MARX

IN THE course of the past year one of the most interesting and vital controversies discussed in the pages of this magazine was the issue of industrialism vs. agrarianism, or mechanization vs. distributism: the organized efficient life of industrial man vs. the free and independent, but perhaps materially poorer, life of the man on the soil.

Looking back on this controversy, I recall that I was struck by the pragmatism of the defenders of industrialism, who pointed to the obvious material benefits of the machine, in contrast to the enemies of industrial civilization, who often wrote along religious and philosophical lines, discussing the nature of man and the goal of life rather than the creation of worldly goods and a higher standard of living. A small book has now appeared (*The Failure of Technology,* by Friedrich Georg Juenger. Henry Regnery, $2.75) which gives a comprehensive treatment to the philosophical aspects of technology, raises the question of ends and means, and charts the path down which technology is leading civilization. The general attitude of the book is shown by its subtitle: "Perfection Without Purpose."

Daily faced with the obvious advantages of the machine, we find it difficult to study analytically and objectively the ultimate end inherent in the inexorable advance of technology. Juenger wrote his book before the war but could not publish it in Hitler's Germany. His indictment of our machine civilization is clearly shown by the following sampling of his chapter headings: The Delusion of the Saving of Labor; The Distribution of Poverty; The Pillage of the Earth; The Invasion of Life by the Automaton; The Tyranny of Causalism Over Man; The Myth of Exact Science; Socialism as the Surrender to Technology; Technical Training versus Education; The Immaturity of Technological Perfection; The Mechanical Sterility of Modern Sports; The Self-frustration of Social Security; The Downfall of the Mechanized State.

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JUENGER'S main points may be summarized as follows: He holds first that the machine has not really saved human labor at all, that when all the facts are examined it is obvious that even more human labor is involved in a technological civilization than in a primitive society. He points to the armies digging the raw materials from the ground, the primitive peoples laboring in Asia and Africa to feed the machines, the vast distribution armies, the millions of clerks, the white-collar bureaucracy both in government and in business, all working according to set hours, by what he calls "dead time," in order to make possible the functioning of a technological society.

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Then the author argues that the ultimate goals of technology are not considered by its disciples. Its key goal he points out is "perfection." A better machine must be made regardless of cost, its effects upon human society, upon our reserves of raw materials, upon the markets of the world, or upon the economic and social organization of the nation. The true scientist pursues this goal of perfection no matter what follows, whether it is an atom bomb or a superior gas which might be able to wipe out whole populations. This drive toward perfection applies not only to technical progress itself but also to the structure of industrial organization. As Mr. Bleibtreu puts it, in an Introduction to the book, "The drive for technical perfection is a self-impelled and irreversible process, which, if left to itself, must end in a completely regimented and mechanized society that lives in a state of exhaustion, both of natural and of human reserves."

One may find fault with some of the detailed arguments used to reach this point. It is possible to prove, I think, that with the advance of technology the general standard of living in industrialized countries, at least, has risen; but Juenger would point out that this is all ephemeral, resting as it does upon the ruthless exploitation of both human and material resources which will finally give out.

Juenger dismisses the ideal of leisure in a few words: "Leisure is the prerequisite of every free thought, every free activity. And this is why only the few are capable of it, since the many, when they have gained time, only kill it. Not everyone is born for free activity, or else the world would not be what it is. . . . No connection whatsoever exists between the reduction of work and leisure and free activity; as little, in fact, as an increase in the speed of locomotion implies a rise in morality, or the invention of telegraphy an increase in clear thinking."

★

IT IS DIFFICULT to agree with Juenger's insistence that technology goes with poverty and scarcity. Yet he argues persuasively, insisting that the human situation characteristic of our machine world is poverty and that poverty is inherent in technology itself. "It has marched in step with the industrial age and it will do so to the end. It marches on in the shape of the proletarian, the man who has no homestead and grows no ear of corn, who has nothing but his bare working capacity, and who is tied to technical progress for better or worse. Therefore, it makes no difference whether the technical apparatus is controlled by the capitalist, or by the proletarian, or run directly by the state." He adds, that one would not think of rationing wealth and plenty but that scarcity and want immediately call forth regulation: "Technical progress is coupled with a growth of organization, with a mushrooming bureaucracy. It requires an enormous personnel, a personnel which is wholly unproductive, yet increasing in number all the faster, the less there is of the things produced."

Juenger makes a considerable point of the relationship to technology of mechanical time, rigidly measured by the clock, in contrast to other possibly valid concepts of time. This section of his book, although of value to his argument, I fear is beyond the comprehension of the average reader who has never given a thought to various philosophical conceptions of time. Technology, according to Juenger, "has brought about a situation where man no longer has time, where he is destitute of time, where he is hungry for time."

Another philosophical concept at the base of Juenger's argument is that of causality. He points out that all our science, all our technology rests upon the idea that the same cause under the same conditions produces the same effects. Once this concept is successfully questioned, then one loses faith in science and technology. He rejects scornfully the comparison which likens the universe to a mechanism: "For a mechanism which repeats the same motions rigidly and uniformly can in no way be compared to the universe, where no two things could be found that are alike, no two causes that could produce the same effect. Since there are no two things that are completely alike, there are no two causes that are completely alike."

★

MUCH of what Juenger says has been said before by writers from the late Gina Lombroso and Eric Gill to Robert M. Hutchins and Jacques Barzun. Many of us have poked fun at the specialists who are increasingly taking over our world even though it is common knowledge that no one is less well-fitted to understand the broader problems of human society than the man skilled in some small aspect of knowledge. But in discussing these things Juenger writes with originality and a striking clarity. He further argues that the usefulness of a piece of mechanical equipment has nothing at all to do with the question of the value of technology: "For no matter how efficient mechanization and organization of work may be, even if the ultimate limits of efficiency of full automatism should be reached, this does not even touch the question we have put; it evades it. That question was: Where does all this efficiency lead to? Where does it leave man? That question cannot be answered by means of functional thinking, which focuses forever upon the wild confusion of phenomena only, and which pursues forever the sequence of phenomena through lifeless time in order to dissect them."

It would be possible to find dozens of other quotations which in their cumulative effect give the most damning, pessimistic and hopeless analysis of modern industrialism which I have ever seen. But this is a book which does not lend itself to easy summarization. Where does the author leave us? Frankly, far along the road to a highly organized, mechanized and totalitarian state in which all human freedom is destroyed because the very nature of man cannot be reconciled with automatism, whether it is on an assembly line in a factory or simply in filing cards in an office. The more human a person is, the more inefficient he is from the standpoint of the machine. It is human to work at an irregular pace the machine will not tolerate. It is human to take more than a half-hour

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for lunch or want to put S before R once in a while, or take a break from monotonous work. Social security according to the author is simply generalized poverty, made necessary by the regimentation of life by technology and by the growth of a proletariat. Socialism is one of the final phases of a technological civilization. The final end of course is war, toward which Juenger believes men are driven irresistibly by the elemental forces released by the machine, demonic forces that can destroy man. Since he does not write from a religious point of view and sees no intervention by Divine Providence in the inexorable drama he portrays, the future is hopeless, man destroyed by organization, by the machine. In words that almost paraphrase Spengler, Juenger sums up our broken dreams:

"Those dreams of leisure, freedom, and wealth created by technical progress are utopian, and so are the ideas of peace, well-being, and happiness in future times. They are utopian because they combine what cannot be combined. The machine is not a godhead lavishing cornucopias of happiness, and the era of the machine does not lead to a peaceful and charming idyll. . . . The price is being paid by the leaden monotony of factory and business life that is now reaching its peak; by mechanical work for one's living; by the operator's dependence upon the automatic tool. The price is paid by the devastation of spiritual life which grows in step with mechanization. We would do well, indeed, to say good-bye to all illusions about the blessings forthcoming from technology, but most of all to that illusion of peaceful happiness it is supposed to bring. Technology has not the wherewithal to bring back Eden."

Worthy of the Anger of an Adams

WAYNE ANDREWS

THAT gruff old patriot John Adams, who sincerely believed that the future of the United States was threatened by no greater danger than a taste for the fine arts, was properly appalled by the glimpses of luxurious living he caught on his visits to the courts of the Old World. In 1786, when he and Jefferson happened to call at Stowe, the magnificent retreat of the Marquis of Buckingham, Adams could scarcely contain his indignation at the Marquis' interest in landscape gardening. "The temples of Bacchus and Venus are quite unnecessary," Adams decided, "as mankind have no need of artificial incitement to such amusements. . . . It will be long, I hope, before ridings, parks, pleasure grounds, gardens, and ornamented farms grow so much in fashion in America."

No doubt if Adams were alive today, he would be outraged by two recent publications, one telling the story of the interior decoration of English houses from 1500 to 1900, and the other the progress of landscape gardening in England from the eighteenth century to the present day. Each of these books is an invitation to luxury, and each equally reprehensible from John Adams' point of view. Both books, if the ghost of John Adams will forgive us, should be read by Americans who aim to cultivate the fine arts; in architecture and in landscape gardening the English past is too rich to be ignored even by the most modern of our modernists.

★

RALPH DUTTON, known to thousands of readers for his handy summaries of the English garden and the English country house, has done it again with *The English Interior* (Batsford, $6). Faced with the task of disentangling interiors from exteriors—a task to frighten most architectural historians—Dutton has somehow succeeded in setting down in one readable volume all of the pertinent facts one needs for a résumé of English interior decoration. Stopping now and then to chat about the change in dinner menus from one century to another, or to meditate on the proper fittings for the bedroom of a queen, Dutton guides us through such wonders as the double-cube room at Wilton, the great hall at Castle Howard, the Egyptian darknesses of Thomas Hope's invention, and even into the Gothic wonderland of Alton Towers.

Like all Batsford books, *The English Interior* is generously illustrated, and for those of us who can't get over to England this summer, here is a pleasant reminder of what would await us at the other end of the gangplank. The chances are, however, that if we could make the trip we might disagree violently with the author's conclusions on the nineteenth century. Dismissing the present revival of interest in the Gothic of our great-grandfathers, Dutton claims that "the prevailing hideousness of interior decoration and furnishings was not a state reached through any lack of interest in the subject, but on the contrary was a carefully achieved condition."

Professor Christopher Tunnard, whose *Gardens in the Modern Landscape* has just been republished in the United States (Scribner's, $5), is not so sure that the nineteenth century was the age of darkness. With a modesty all too rare in historians, Tunnard tells us in his introduction that his "original rather cursory estimate of the nineteenth century has undergone considerable revision as the result of further investigations, which have proved that the inventions of our grandfathers and great-grandfathers often possessed great daring and originality. This opinion is based on the discovery that the nineteenth century revivals were not always mere essays in copyism, but actually productive of entirely new forms and expressions. Our attitude of hasty condemnation may well give way to one of considerable respect as the full story unfolds. More power to those who have begun to encourage an interest in our immediatte past!"

★

AS one might expect from an historian willing to change his mind, and anxious to confess it, Tunnard's examination of landscape gardening is rich in insights, and his plans for today and tomorrow too flexible to be classed with the homelier utopian dreams of our

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modernists. He even questions—to the dismay, no doubt of many eager students—whether there is any connection between architecture and a "better" society. "There is," he writes, "a dangerous fallacy in thinking that a certain kind of architecture or planning is intrinsically *better* than another. From this stems the idea that its widespread use will help to build a better society. But architecture and physical planning have never shaped society; although planners have presumably been shaped by the society in which they live. . . . On reflection, it will appear that the programme of physical planning is the agent which influences society and that what the programme produces will be determined by what it says and who writes." Architects, so badly needed in community planning, "should not try to dictate its final form."

The plates in *Gardens in the Modern Landscape* are superb, and we defy anyone to open the book at the enchanting view of the interior of the Gothic temple at Pain's Hill without being obsessed with a desire to read every word of Professor Tunnard's chronicle of landscape gardening, from the eighteenth century ideal of the landscape into the garden, down to the twentieth century dream of the garden into the landscape. The story is well told, not without an occasional trace of wit.

Books

Fraternity Village. Ben Ames Williams. Houghton. $3.00.

FEW WHO have been lucky enough to spend a summer vacation down East need convincing that there are more "characters" per community in Maine than in any other state. Mr. Williams intimates, in a rather disarming preface to this series of sixteen Maine short stories, that meeting up with one such colorful individual gave him his professional start. At least it led to the composition of 125 short stories, four-fifths of which he sold—over half of them to the *Saturday Evening Post.*

Success on such a scale could do with some explaining. And in this brief preface Ben Ames Williams makes much of his concern for local color and characterization at the expense of plot. Too often, however, he confuses bringing out a single quirk of some local village "character" with the subtleties of full-bodied characterization. He also relies heavily on the anticipated enthusiasm of his masculine magazine audience for fishing and hunting to carry several stories through. As a devotee of Maine, I do not believe that Mr. Williams has introduced nearly as much local color as he seems to think. In the end it is his ability to tell a good uncomplicated yarn—accent on plot, in fact—that explains why most of these stories do come off.

Yet there is one unusual element about the book. It is more than anything else a personal tribute to the author's friend, Bert McCorrison ("Chet McAusland" in the stories). For so practiced a writer it is a strangely inarticulate tribute. We learn that Chet was a man of parts, remarkably informed as a farmer and sportsman, a lover of animals, a devoted husband with attractive foibles, the soul of generosity—and a man who in the most bitter personal extremity cheerfully accepted God's will. Nevertheless as a living, breathing personality Chet somehow eludes the reader.

What has come through is the degree to which his friend Ben became devoted to him. The eleventh story, "Chet McAusland of Fraternity," which sums it all up, has its wise and poignant moments—I daresay it contains the deepest expression of feeling in all the short and long stories Ben Ames Williams has ever written.

EDWARD S. SKILLIN.

Lead, Kindly Light. Vincent Sheean. Random House. $3.75.

VINCENT SHEEAN, once a liberal with vague agnostic ideas, came to India in 1944 as an officer of our Army Air Forces. He was spellbound by India, as was once Lafcadio Hearn by Japan. There are few living journalists about whose life we are so well informed as about this reporter's since he has given us four rather commonplace autobiographical volumes: *Personal History, Not Peace But A Sword, Between the Thunder and the Sun* and *This House Against This House.*

If we accept Sheean's new book as the continuation of his autobiography, we have to admit that it is by far the most interesting of his volumes: the detour to India helped the man, once reared in the Catholic faith, to overcome the emptiness of his decades alienated from religion and to face again genuine religious problems—though wrapped in the exotic atmosphere of Indian traditions. Sheean was attracted to the great personality of Gandhi, whom he made not only his personal "guru," but who also inspired him with new hope for the future of the Occodental world.

Lead Kindly Light is a mixture of personal conversion and some popular information on Hinduism, especially on Gandhi's life.

Sheean regards the Mahatma primarily as a religious personality. Was it the strong Christian element in Gandhi that impressed the reporter who had enjoyed a religious boyhood? Sheean does not specifically admit that the Christian elements in Gandhi's teaching overwhelmed him. He even omits in his story of Gandhi's life his guru's first surprising impressions of Catholic worship. Until his first visit to a Catholic country Gandhi had believed that kneeling and prayer were mere superstition, but when he saw in France the dignity and reverence of the Catholic worshippers he understood at once. He felt that religious ceremonies were not detracting from, but increasing, the glory of God.

★

THE CHRISTIAN element in Gandhi's ethics is worthy of more thorough research. He thought that the deepest element of religion is Truth, and that truth can be found in the religion of different civilizations. He was not afraid to introduce Christian, Islam and Buddhist texts, with the traditional Hindu litera-

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ture, in his prayer services. The title of Vincent Sheean's new book derives from Gandhi's favorite Christian hymn.

It seems that no religious text influenced the Mahatma more deeply than the Sermon on the Mount. It was only after his spiritual catharsis that Gandhi plunged into Hindu literature and expressed his religious feelings and thoughts as much as possible in the terms of the philosophical and poetical Hindu tradition, in order to influence his Indian nation. He fell in love with the genuine poetry and the metaphysical depth of "Bagavad Gita," which he admired as the essence of Hindu genius. He quotes the Bible freely, but much more, of course, the Gita. Orthodox Hindu scholars claim that he approaches this classical Indian work "unduly influenced" by the New Testament. Considering the decisive Christian impetus that made Gandhi's philosophical thought a synthesis of Occidental and Oriental elements and, just because of this such a dynamic influence in India's decisive hour, I feel very doubtful indeed whether Sheean is right in treating Ramakrishna and Vivekanda as "Gandhi's forerunners."

Sheean's new book is a touching assertion that religion is necessary for man and it is a tribute to Gandhi as a great spiritual leader. In many details the author is both loquatious and confused. His own philosophy is uncomprehensive and flimsy. I am afraid his popularization of Gandhi's way of Peace will cause some spiritual confusion instead of establishing clear insight. MAX FISCHER

Young William Washbourne. Humphrey Pakington. Norton. $3.00.

"WE'VE HAD that once," says Mrs. White-Wright, reproving Mrs. Wilkins, who is going on, interminably as usual, about what *she* said to her husband, the Admiral. The alert reader of *Young William Washbourne,* especially if he happens to have sat in on one of Mr. Pakington's earlier novels, will be able to echo the remark a dozen times at least. Mr. Pakington's latest is a thin soufflé of tennis matches, genteel sabre play in the drawing room, and a well-bred love story. It all begins when young William and his cousin John, then mere boys, watch the funeral yacht of Queen Victoria leaving the Isle of Wight. The end of an era and all that, but William and his set do not know it, for they go dreamily on, living the present as though it were the past, right up through the Armistice.

"It was six long years since that sunny evening on the cricket-ground," the author tells us at one point; and he goes on like that, upsetting protracted scenes of conversation with dizzying chronology. Some of the static moments, though, are good: Lady Washborune's sermon on Hope at a tea party, and the scene in Mrs. Wilkins' drawing room when the cousins in turn threaten her with a libel action are handled with full attention to the nuances. William's vexed engagement to Myrtle and his dedication (so blithely rewarded) to Cynthia, who marries John, provide a mild plot, but Mr. Pakington mostly

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Next Week:

Short and Select

by

J. F. Powers

ignores it for Mrs. Wilkins' booming, "I said to the Admiral, Valentine. . . ." The thing just refuses to hang together.

RILEY HUGHES.

The Grasshopper's Man. Rosalie Moore. Yale. $2.50.
Poems 1928-1948. *Edouard Roditi. New Directions.* $2.00.
Viaticum. Robert Thom. Golden Goose Press. $1.00.

MISS MOORE'S book is the 47th in the Yale Series of Younger Poets. None of her 46 predecessors has yet evolved into a major poet, though some, like Hervey Allen, have won fame in other ways. Many are called, but few are chosen. There is no denying Miss Moore's call, however. Her theme would appear to be the non-human that is implicit in the human, as her title poem suggests. Man, as the grasshopper sees him, is "an engine," "a black coat," among other things. This theme is treated in a style reminiscent of the Metaphysical Poets, which often reads like a very private shorthand. Take this from "Parade With Piccolos," one of the easier poems:

> Sun—and the sky is a bright, buttery sack;
> The crowds put out their little bacon flags,
> Lift up children to see:
>
> How it comes with kicking of kettles,
> The hairpins marching.

Luckily we've all seen a parade; the "bacon" flags are striped like bacon, I guess. Old Glory is as everyday as bacon, which also echoes "buttery." The "hairpins" image strikes the non-human note again. But what happens when a poet writes in this manner about an experience that is not common to all of us?

I cannot escape the feeling that Mr. Roditi ceased to be a poet around 1934, when he was about 24. Many men do at that age. First love, and the first surge of literary ambition, are over by then. To continue to be a poet, one must have mastered a technique and also be able to make poetic material out of experiences other than the fundamentals—love and death. Too many of Mr. Roditi's subjects are not felt; he is writing from the top of his head, not the bottom of his heart. So far from possessing a satisfactory technique, he sometimes strikes me as an unwitting victim of the malady known as "the tin ear." Take the following stanza, not his worst, as a sample of pretentious cliché and jumbled rhythm:

> Manhattan, Manhattan, thy towers more lofty
> Than lofty-towered Ilion's must fall as low
> As Priam's city, forgotten and buried
> Beneath seven cities, seals on history's book.

Now for the pamphlet, or "Chap Book," from the Golden Goose Press of Columbus, Ohio. Mr. Thom, who is only 19, has discovered sin, death and the im-

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minent destruction of our civilization, but I doubt if they mean as much to him personally as he thinks they ought to. In fact, at times he seems, in spite of himself, to be having jolly good fun in his rather conventional chamber of horrors. It will be some time yet, I imagine, before he can experience life directly, rather than through the pages of the psychology books. He has the beginnings of a neat wit. Catholicism seems to provide him with a vocabulary rather than with a deeply-felt world-view.

VIVIAN MERCIER.

U. S. A.: Measure of a Nation. Thomas R. Carskadon and Rudolf Modley. Macmillan. $1.00.

THE Twentieth Century Fund has arranged for people who prefer to look rather than to read this "Graphic Presentation of America's Needs and Resources." What the book gives, it gives with admirable clarity in the modern manner of "presentation." It tells about the getting and spending of what we get and spend, and about what we would get and spend if recent social and economic and political trends continued through 1960. That is, if current semi-welfare state liberal propaganda also prevailed. The material given is striking enough to make one restless for economic and social and intellectual material which is not given.

Man's Last End. Joseph Buckley. Herder. $3.50.

CENTRAL to this study is the question of what thing, or group of things, could have brought complete happiness to man had God chosen to endow him only with a natural destiny. Modern Scholastic philosophers tend to see the contemplation of God in His creatures as that end. But Father Buckley's answer runs contrary to the answer of his confreres.

He maintains that mankind lacks a concrete last end in the psychological order of nature. He believes that the object of natural strivings is really something disparate, i.e., a multitude of partial goods with God Himself sought only after the fashion of a partial good. And therefore he contends that on a purely natural plane, man, in reaching for happiness, would have tended toward many diverse objects, no one of which could have satisfied him fully.

This reviewer must admit that he found Father Buckley's case cogently put. But not being a philosopher himself, he hesitates to venture further. For if so well-received a book as Father William O'Connor's, *The Eternal Quest* (published in 1947) has come upon criticism at the hands of specialists (witness Lumbreras' comments in the April issue of *The Thomist*), it is not improbable that this present work will incur the same.

Still, on behalf of non-philosophers like himself, this reveiwer would plead with phiosophers like Father Buckley to be more generous in their use of summaries. If for no other reason, to give ordinary folk some assurance that we have caught their argument. For it is a discouraging thing to have to go back a dozen pages or more to trace again the thread of a thought lost in a lengthy citation. Particularly when the citation itself may have caused the distraction by using terms like "agent" and "patient" in a sense at variance with standard English usage.

HENRY G. J. BECK.

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Shakespeare Survey 2. *Edited by Allardyce Nicoll. Cambridge.* $3.75.

THE SECOND volume of the *Shakespeare Survey* is as good as the first. The articles are varied, and though most of them are for the specialist, anyone who has a serious interest in Shakespeare will find something to hold him.

Of the dozen contributions the most generally interesting is Miss Muriel St. Clare Byrne's "Fifty Years of Shakespearian Production: 1898-1948," with its ten pages of plates, which will stir the memories of veteran playgoers and stimulate all who are concerned with the staging of Shakespeare's plays. There is matter here for a fascinating book. For scholars, biblographers and experts on textural matters, Professor R. C. Bald's reconsideration of *"The Books of Sir Thomas More* and its problems" is particularly valuable. His conclusions, based on a re-examination of the original manuscript, show almost conclusively that the famous Three Pages are indeed in Shakespeare's own handwriting, but if so, were written in 1600-01. Dr. Leslie Hotson contributes an interesting account of a grandiose proposal for an Amphithreatre for the display of "martial exercises and extraordinary shows" which was favored by King James I but never matured. M. Mikail Morozou's article on "The individualization of Shakespeare's characters through imagery" suggrests a line of inquiry which might well be developed in greater detail and reveals a considerable critical interest in Shakespeare in dramatic and scholarly circles in the USSR.

Finally, the year's contributions to Shakespearian study are summarized in three surveys. Scholars and librarians will find these annual surveys indispensable, but they evoke the solemn thought that when so much is being written about Shakespeare no one man can now absorb the complete output. We are almost at the time when universities will appoint not merely Shakespeare "specialists" but special professors of individual plays. The story of the Sorcerer's Apprentice has become an allegory of modern scholarship in English. G. B. HARRISON.

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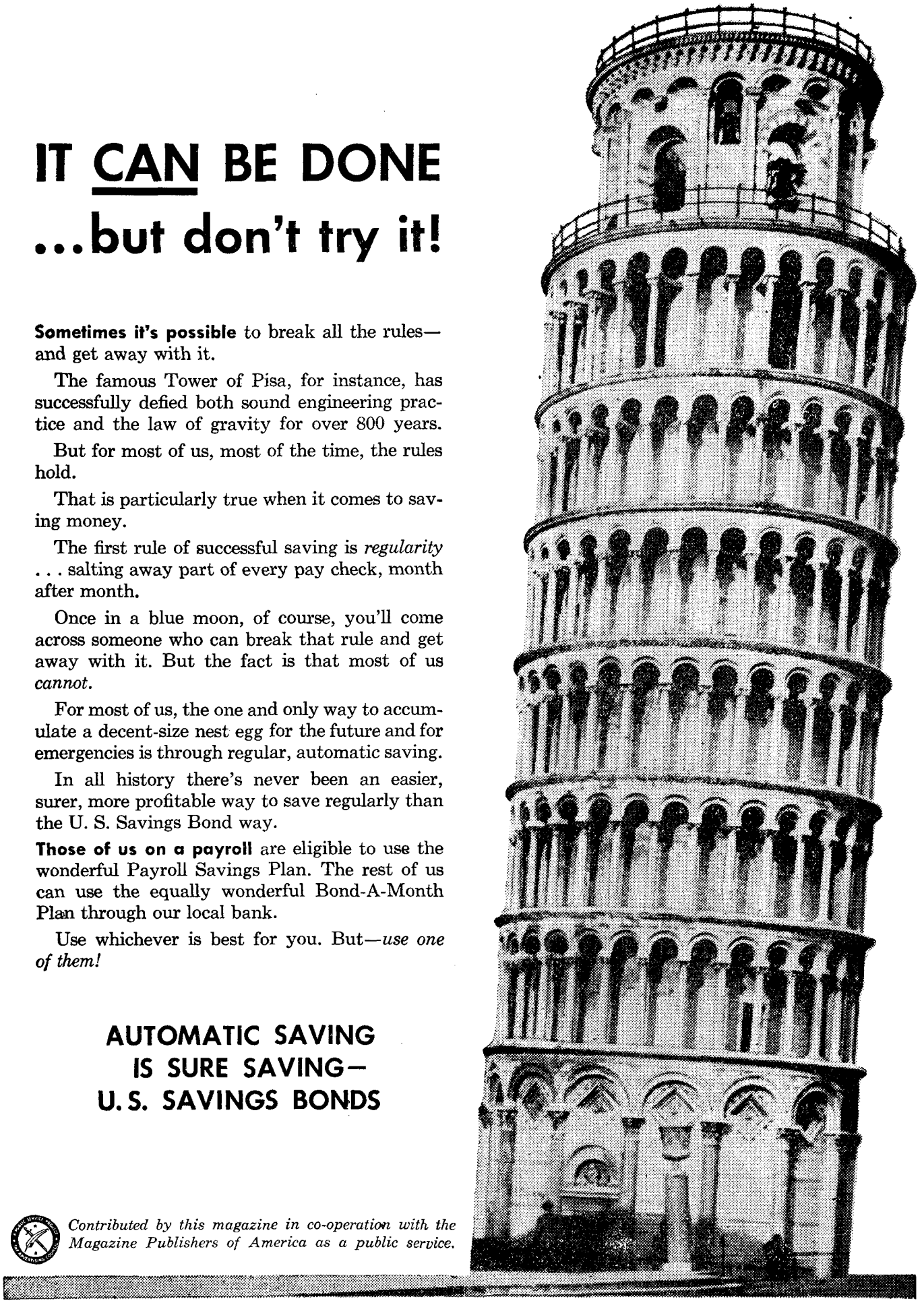

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